



A helpful guidance for your child's attendance at school

What you need to know

The Department for Education publishes guidance regarding attendance, this document is called "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" with regular updates and expectations. This guidance is designed to provide a brief overview of the changes and what it may mean for you and your child.

At Wootton Community Primary School our whole school attendance target is 96.5% but we would like to be above this. Research shows that children with a high level of attendance benefit not only with their educational achievement in Primary school, but also leading to much improved longer-term outcomes academically, emotionally and socially in life. We therefore encourage 100% attendance as much as we can.

What is meant by term time leave or irregular attendance?

Term time leave refers to pupils taken out of school during the term. Irregular attendance is patterns of absence during the school year.

A TPN (truancy penalty notice) will be issued for term time leave (leave outside of the determined school holidays) of 5 or more consecutive days. Staff development days, where school is closed to pupils, **may now also be included in the 5 or more days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave** (for example, if a development day is on a Monday and the child is then absent for the remainder of the week this will count as 5 or more days and a TPN may be issued).

A TPN will also be considered when there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period (a session is a registration period of which there are 2 a day, AM and PM). An unauthorised absence is recorded if a child is late to school after the register closes and therefore will be counted in the 10-week period.

Within this guidance is the National Framework for Penalty Notices, Truancy Penalty Notices (TPN), these are as follows;

First Instance

The first time a TPN is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child, paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Instance (Within a 3-year period)

The second time a TPN is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child, paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for earlier payment.

There is now a cap on the number of TPN notices that will be issued to a family, the issuing of these fines is as a deterrent and if that is not effective then the guidance now means the matter will be escalated.

Third Instance (Within a 3-year period)

There is now a cap on the number of TPNs that can be issued. On the third instance of term time leave or irregular attendance a TPN will not be issued and the matter will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

If a case is found guilty in a Magistrates' Court this can then show if a parent were to apply for a DBS check. A parent's future DBS certificate may not be given due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

What you need to do to help with your child's attendance

- Ensure that your child is in school prior to the gates closing at 8.40am.
- Ensure that your child is present in school during term time unless they have an **emergency appointment** that you have provided us with evidence of, you have requested a leave of absence for an exceptional circumstance, or they are too unwell to attend school. If your child is unwell, please refer to the information shared with all parents about common childhood illnesses and when it is advised that your child should remain at home.
- Contact the school should you have any worries about whether your child should remain at home or not or you have any concerns about getting your child into school.
- Contact the school via email or phone call by 9am to advise the office of the reason for your child's absence and contact the school on every day of that absence unless advised that it is not required.
- Provide evidence of booked appointments in advance where possible but upon return to school at the latest (letters, screenshots, emails etc. all acceptable).
- We recognise that hospital appointments often fall during the school day but request that all other routine medical appointments are made after school and during the school holidays.
- Complete a leave of absence request for any planned absence in advance in order to allow school time to respond to this request. Absence cannot be authorised retrospectively.

What school will do?

- The attendance lead will monitor all children's attendance and will apply a graduated approach to dealing with concerns around attendance. This will always be done by adopting a support first approach; we will look to have a conversation with you to ascertain why your child's attendance is declining and try to agree steps that can be taken by yourself and school to improve this. If this does not improve attendance then we will look to invite you to meet with the attendance lead and our education and inclusion officer to discuss what the barriers to attendance are and again look at providing support. This is for children who are affected by irregular attendance and is to attempt to prevent the need to submit a TPN.
- If your child is absent due to an unauthorised holiday we are required to notify the Local Authority who will instruct school to issue a TPN.
- If your child is absent from school due to being unwell and there is reasonable doubt as to the validity of that illness, we may undertake a home visit to confirm the whereabouts of your child and that they are unwell. Alternatively, or in addition to, we may ask you to obtain medical advice and provide evidence of this. If you are unable to provide evidence that your child was unwell, the absence may be marked as unauthorised and will count towards irregular attendance. Please note evidence is only required if we have reason to question the validity of the illness.
- If the school have concerns about the validity of the absence or are unable to ascertain the welfare of your child, contact will be made with other schools/settings to confirm the attendance/wellbeing of siblings.
- The attendance lead will be available to discuss any worries you have about your child's attendance please contact school to request an appointment.

The attendance officer is: Mrs Caligari

The attendance lead is: Mrs Pye

School telephone number: 01983 882505 with a dedicated absence reporting line

Email for attendance: office@woottonpri.iow.sch.uk

For leave of absence requests please complete a form, available from the school office or on the school website. **This must be completed in advance.**

We also recognise that children do have illnesses. We are in a position now, with your consent, to administer Calpol so recommend that you still send your child to school if they have a mild cough, headache etc. We will also always ask you to collect your child if they become worse during the day.

Thank you for your support in working together to ensure your child, wherever possible, attends school every day.